

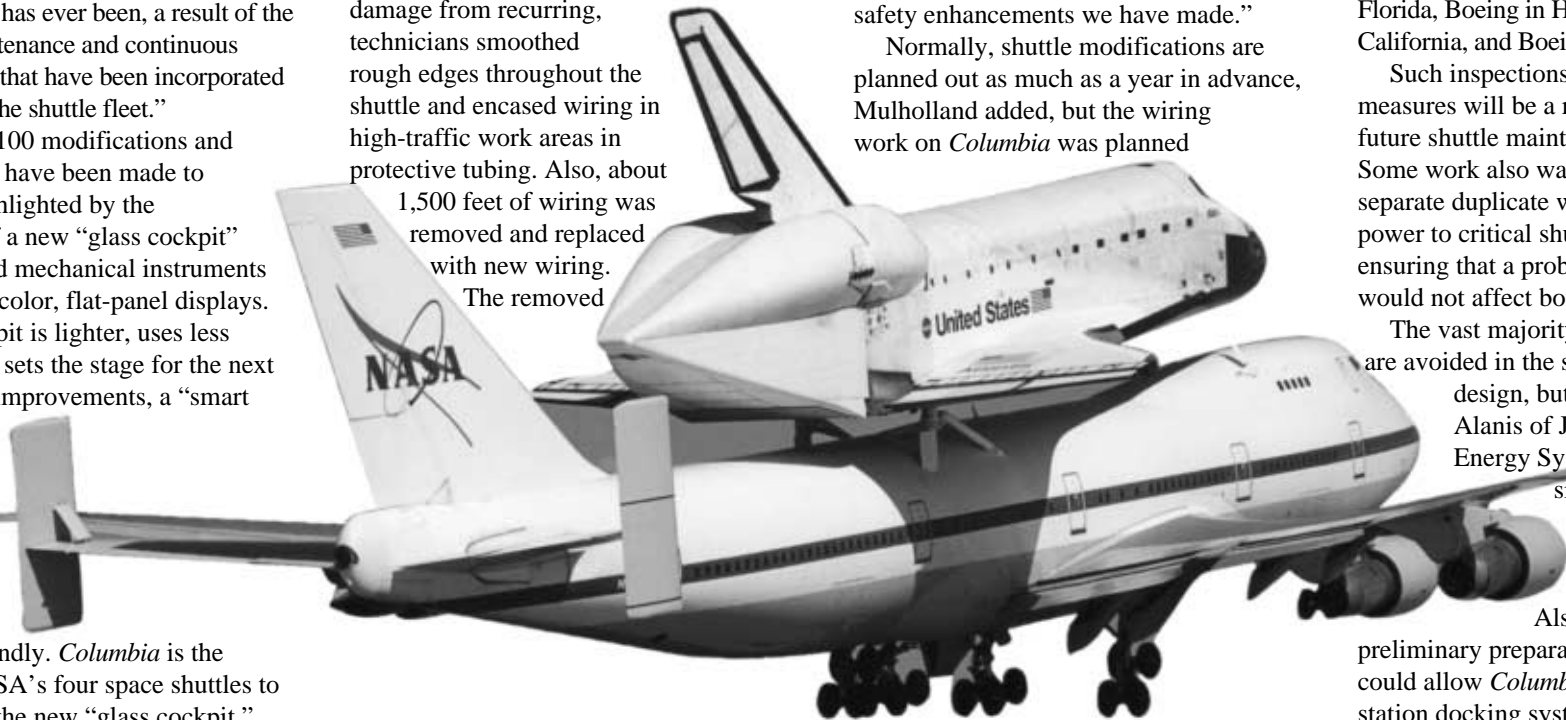
by James Hartsfield

Work at Palmdale on *Columbia* began when it arrived there from Florida on Sept. 26, 1999. Other improvements that were made include weight reductions that have increased the amount of cargo *Columbia* can carry to orbit by hundreds

The removed

Normally, shuttle modifications are planned out as much as a year in advance, Mulholland added, but the wiring work on *Columbia* was planned

While *Columbia* was in California, technicians scoured the shuttle during months of intensive structural inspections, using the latest technology to check for even minute signs of fatigue, corrosion or broken rivets or welds. ■



– Ron Dittemore
Space Shuttle Program Manager

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challenging destinations, we're going to be able to put that into reality as well. So we're going to leave Earth orbit behind once the station is complete and we'll be back on the Moon, and we'll be places like the asteroids and on Mars quicker than somebody can ask us to do it if we're just given the license to do that." ■



STS98-E-5195

Astronaut Thomas D. Jones, STS-98 mission specialist, waves at crew mates inside *Atlantis*' crew cabin while working on the International Space Station (ISS) during the second of three scheduled space walks involving himself and astronaut Robert L. Curbeam and assisted by their STS-98 astronauts aboard *Atlantis*.